



LYRIC THEATER FACT SHEET

Lyric Theater Thumbnail History

- Operated 1948 – 1963
- 2nd District Retirees Activate – 1990
- Lyric Project Embraced – 1992
- Brazley Brothers Report – 1993
- State Cultural Facility MOU – 1997

LFUCG Acquisition of Theater Property

The theater was acquired through an eminent domain proceeding that began April 30, 1997 and was concluded on September 27-28, 2005, more than 8 years in length. During this time frame the building suffered significant further deterioration.

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Timeframe

Acquisition of the property set into motion a timeframe for completion that is outlined in a MOU with the state (see below). The MOU timeframe is as follows, (with specific dates projected and added in):

- | | |
|--------------------|--------------------|
| ▪ July 27, 2005 | Theater Acquired |
| ▪ August 3, 2007 | Plans to State |
| ▪ January 27, 2008 | Begin Construction |
| ▪ January 27, 2010 | Complete Project |

Penalty for non-compliance is \$500 per day beyond timeframe (\$15,000 per month / \$182,500 per year).

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Commonwealth of Kentucky

Originally dated January 22, 1997, and amended June 28, 2002, with regard to the Lyric Theater facility The MOU addressed a number of cultural facility projects and investments to be undertaken by the Lexington Fayette Urban County Government (LFUCG) in lieu of a central facility at the former Ben Snyder block. All projects have been completed except for the Lyric Theater, due to the lengthy legal process of acquiring the facility through an eminent domain proceeding. Under the MOU, the theater is to be restored as an African American museum. Minimum LFUCG investment is \$1 million (1995 dollars); LFUCG has set aside \$1.26 million already, used primarily to acquire theater (\$240,000), adjacent property (\$295,000), and pay for professional services (\$350,000 architectural; \$25,000 legal; \$55,000 programming / business plan; \$6,000 engineering / appraisal).

Lyric Theater Task Force / Public Input Process

The Lyric Theater Task Force was appointed in October, 2005 and charged by LFUCG to develop a long-term sustainable plan for the theater property in compliance with the MOU terms and provisions. The stated mission of the Lyric Theater Task Force is *"to bring forth an exciting facility redevelopment plan that reflects and respects the theater's rich African American cultural heritage, while providing a slate of sustainable new opportunities for community use of the facility that complies with the governing state agreement"*. The task force's initial report was issued to the LFUCG Council on October 10, 2006. The \$6 million conceptual design presented was approved unanimously by formal resolution. The original 1995 investment amount under the MOU is clearly not enough to do a viable redevelopment of the theater as a community cultural facility. It is also clear that a stand-alone African-American Heritage Museum at this location would likely not be able to survive. To generate a sustainable facility for the long-term, several community needs would have to be met through the project. Thus the redevelopment concept that gives the best chance for success includes live performance theater (550 seats), African American Heritage museum, and a substantial amount of community flexible space. The building design will also be LEED Certified (a green building), the first such project for LFUCG. Task Force activities to date include:

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|-----------------------------------|-------|
| ▪ Task Force Open Meetings | 28 |
| ▪ Public Forums | 6 |
| ▪ Open House Events | 4 |
| ▪ Attendance | 1,900 |
| ▪ Technical Studies / Reports | 4 |
| ▪ Site Visits / Facility Consults | 7 |
| ▪ Newspaper Articles / Editorials | 10 |

Current & Ongoing Related Community Efforts

Additional efforts underway in the community that focus importance on the completion of the Lyric Theater:

- Bluegrass Aspendale Redevelopment – HOPE VI
- William Wells Brown Elementary Community School and Boulevard connecting Midland to Loudon
- Knight Foundation Center for Legacy Initiatives – Third Street Corridor from Elm Tree Lane to Midland
- Isaac Murphy Community Garden – Bill Strickland program expansion
- Downtown Master Plan – Lyric Property represents NE corner connecting downtown to neighborhood
- LexArts Long Term Cultural Facilities Plan – Lyric has unique niche and can complement other facilities